



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE **107th** CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2002

Senate

RECOGNITION OF JAMES JOHNSON'S RETIREMENT

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of James Johnson upon his retirement from Daimler Chrysler and as president of UAW Local 1183 in Newark, DE, after more than thirty-eight years of dedicated service. Known to friends and colleagues alike as "JJ," he is a man with a kind heart, diverse interests and great abilities. JJ embodies the best of Delaware, the UAW and the American worker.

JJ joined Chrysler as an assembler in 1964 and affiliated with UAW Local 1183. Over time, he began to work his way up through the leadership ranks of his local. By the 1980's, he had been elected a committeeman, and he served as a facilitator for the negotiation of the assembly plant's historic Modern Operating Agreement. His leadership ability apparent, he continued to climb the leadership ladder. Beginning in the early 1990's, his brothers and sisters of Local 1183 elected him as their vice-president three times, a post that he held for eight years. Then, in June of 2001, JJ assumed the post of president of his local, a leadership position that he has held until his retirement.

I have had the privilege of knowing JJ for more than two decades. We first worked together when I was Delaware's State treasurer in 1980 and negotiated the State's loan to Chrysler during the company's darkest hours. Right from the start, JJ impressed me as one who possessed the qualities of a leader. He was interested in doing what was right. He believed in doing

things well. He followed the Golden Rule, treating others the way he wanted to be treated. He was adept at hammering out compromises, but when he knew he was right, he was loath to give up. Never boisterous or overbearing, JJ's quiet confidence helped to make him an effective advocate for his members and won the respect of Chrysler's management team at their Newark, DE assembly plant. I especially respected his willingness to share the credit when things went right, while assuming the blame when things went wrong.

JJ deserves a good deal of the credit for helping to foster the positive relationship between labor and management that is the hallmark of DaimlerChrysler's Newark assembly plant. The rapport he helped to establish has served to preserve the plant during an era when many other automotive plants were closed due to over-capacity. Under his leadership, an atmosphere of cooperation emerged to replace the atmosphere of confrontation that had earlier existed. Under his watchful eye, quality products were built and productivity was enhanced as labor and management learned to work together towards common goals.

JJ has been a respected colleague for over half of his life, and he remains a trusted friend to many. He takes pride in his work and has made thousands of autoworkers proud to work alongside him. I thank him for his friendship, congratulate him on a successful first career and wish him and his family only

the very best in all that lies ahead for him and for them.